

WABASH RIVER HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION

Lincoln Room at the Log Inn 1250 S at 200 E, Warrenton, Gibson County, Indiana

Meeting Minutes- May 14, 2008

Voting Member Present:

Allen County - Ron Zartman
Carroll County - George Mears
Cass County - Janet Fawley
DNR – Dale Brier
Gibson County - N. Sherrell Marginet
Knox County - Shane Cooper
Miami County - Ken Einselen
Posey County - Ralph Weinzapfel
Warren County - Margy Deveral
Vermillion County - James McFall
Vigo County - Keith Ruble (alternate)

Proxy Voters Present:

Wells County – Susan Ruble
Huntington County – Connie Weinzapfel

Non-Voting Members Present:

DNR - Division of Historic Preservation and
Archeology – Paul Diebold

Voting Members Absent w/o Proxy:

Adams County - John Friedt
Parke County - Penny Cox
Sullivan County - John J. Gettinger
Fountain County - Lowell Osborn
Jay County - Faron Parr
Tippecanoe Co. - Norman (Lucky) Neiburger
Wabash County - Michael Beauchamp

Commission and DNR staff Present

Ron James – WHRCC Executive Director
Jewell Baxter - DNR
Bruce Beasley – DNR Historic Sites
Ryan Hoff – DNR Legislative Director

Guests:

Diann McIntosh - Vermillion County (alt)
Bob Townsend – Gibson County (alt)
Eric Stallsmith – www.wabashriver.us
Dale Phillips – National Park Service

Call to Order, Receipt of Proxies, and Introductions

Host N. Sherrell Marginet opened the meeting, due to the illness of both President John Gettinger and Vice-President Norman Neiburger, and called for a President Pro tem nomination. Janet Fawley nominated Ken Einselen to preside. Ralph Weinzapfel seconded. Nominations were closed and the motion passed unanimously. Dale Brier noted the proxies and introductions of all present were made.

The Review and Approval of March 12, 2008 Meetings Minutes

Ken E. requested review and additions or corrections to the March 12, 2008 meeting minutes as provided. Jan F. moved the minutes be accepted as written, Ron Zartman 2nd. Motion carried.

Shane Cooper requested suspension of the agenda to introduce Dale Phillips and Bruce Beasley. Shane requested Dale P. bring the Commission up to date on a corridor group project concerning the 1812 Bicentennial War. Starting in 2009, commemorating events will begin. Events to be highlighted will be the 1809 meeting between Prophet and Harrison; the Tecumseh confrontation of 1810 and 1811; the Tippecanoe campaign; and, the resultant War of 1812. Dale P. requested the Corridor Commission decide how best to participate and bring attention to any proposed activities. Dale P. went on to describe a proposed 'travel brochure' patterned after Historic Southern Indiana's S.R. 50 & and 'buffalo trace' route. The route would start at Vincennes and run up to Tippecanoe. The brochure would further highlight the event series (Dale P. will have a website with the entire schedule), a list of counties through which Harrison's army traveled and a chronology of events leading to the battle of Tippecanoe. The different organizations on board with the project were named. Dale P. indicated that the committee members are named by federal legislation. Jan F. moved that the Commission acknowledge the events; that the Commission will work with local

coordinators to encourage participation; and that the Commission's Executive Director, Ron James, is to work with the organization to determine the extent of the Commission's involvement. Shane C. seconded. Asked about state funding, both Dale P. and Bruce B. said none have been promised; they have been using only pre-existing resources. Volunteer re-enactors for the battles and the marches and the possibility of painting pictures of the reenactments for sale were discussed. Due to opposing viewpoints of these historic events, the Commission was assured that these "commemorations" (vs. "celebrations" for e.g.) are being planned for all viewpoints. The motion carried.

President's Report (John Gettinger)

Ron J. reported that President John Gettinger had been in an auto crash but was healing. He sent his regrets but was under a 'no travel' restriction from his physician.

Executive Director's Report (Ron James)

Ron J. passed out his printed report (attached for 2/27/08 to 5/2/08). Ron noted that the Upper Wabash River Basin Commission had rolled out their, as yet unfunded, Sec. 319 plan. He stated that every Board of County Commissioners approached to date had approved the River Road and River Community signage projects. Ron believes Huntington County has already begun posting and Wabash County has a posting plan in place and asked for 10 River Community and 24 River Road signs (to be partnered with 66, locally-provided, 6" directional signs). Ron also spoke about the national River Rally and how our nominee, Bernie Dahl, won a National River Hero award. Our award, "Citizen of the Wabash 2008" (designed by Mercedes Brugh; produced at a cost of \$147), was also presented during the ceremonies. Bernie Dahl plans to attend our next meeting.

Finance Report (Dale Brier)

Dale B. stated that the balance for '07-'08 was around \$8500.00 with ~\$7775.00 already allocated. His estimate of allocation was based on: 1) travel expenses incurred; 2) 8 X \$250 local event grants; 3) the second batch of River Road signs (\$2700+/-); 4) Posts and hardware for Water Trail kiosks. Proposed purchases, funds permitting, include a folding table, a folding canopy, a kiosk cleaning system, such as a portable pressure sprayer, updated stationary, or kiosk map boxes.

As to '08-'09, the Commission starts with \$91,000.00 but has been directed to budget based on a 10 percent reserve. The eventual 'reserve' may be lower; Dale B. did not know when the final amount would be determined. This leaves \$81,900. The executive director contract (from which all normal employment expenses are met) is \$64,750.00, plus \$1K for 'out-of-state' travel. Of the \$16,150 left, \$6H is office/utilities, \$4H is phone, and \$6K is member travel, leaving ~\$9K for miscellaneous and ongoing programs. A discussion of meeting expense reduction, including a reduction in meeting number, teleconference or phone attendance, location of meetings, facility costs, etc., was held.

Dale B. noted that John G. had stressed the need to push last session's H.B. 1115 concept again. Dale opined that passage would remove some budget pressure as it would relate to programs (brochure printing, sign programs, matching grants, etc.). Ron J. recapped this Bill's concept (royalties from minerals extracted from under the Wabash to a non-reverting Corridor Fund) and the legislative result. A discussion of 'near-term' expenses such as a replacement computer (~\$2500), computer programs & maintenance (~\$1500/yr), and stationary & misc. printing (~\$400) versus 'program' costs, such as awards (~\$600/6), video (~\$60,000), signs (~\$2500/batch), 4th ed. brochure (~\$20,000), 2nd ed. Water Trail Maps (~\$7,000) was held. Dale stated that the '07 budget, with pro-rata reduction for the reserve, could be the '08-'09 budget. Keith made a motion to accept this as the '08-'09 budget, to be written out for the July meeting. Ralph W. 2nd; motion carried.

Committee Reports

Signs: Ken E. asked for a volunteer to Chair the River Road, River Community & Heritage Corridor sign programs. Ken said that he could work on the committee and that he would see if Dave Hacker. would be chair. Ron showed the commission a prototype of the bridge sign from Prison Enterprise Network. He asked the group if there was anything about the sign that they did not like. Shane C. pointed out that these 18" signs may not be able to be seen at bridges far above the water. Ron recapped this sign's concept as logo recognition, not legibility, from afar with lettering to provide 'localized' access & amenity information. A discussion of possible larger bridge signs for the 'big' bridge portion of the water trail was had. INDOT permission and help would need to be bridge by bridge. Each Commissioner should request their INDOT district help mount signs on State bridges. Ryan H. stated that each member should call their INDOT district's Customer Service Center.

Banks of the Wabash: Ken E. talked about the Detrash the Wabash event scheduled for 9 a.m. 5/17. Ken said Allen/Huntington/Wabash (Towpath Trail) and Sullivan counties have started chapters but have not reached 25 members. Ken also stated that they are trying to get an event started where each county does the Detrash the Wabash on the same day; to spread the cleanup program to more areas.

The discussion turned to a discussion on recycling. Ralph W. moved that the Commission prepare & support a 'bottle deposit' bill to foster recycling and Sherrill M. 2nd the motion. Keith R. wanted to know more about why the last bottle bill failed; stated that there should be research done so as to not repeat that failure. Dale B. said that he would be able to report this information. Ralph amended his motion to have the Commission prepare a resolution to support a deposit bill, and to have Dale B's report for that discussion, at the July meeting. Sherrill M. amended his 2d. The motion carried.

Legislative: The legislative 2008 wrap up and formation for 2009 was discussed. Jan F. & Ron J. discussed follow-up with Rory's efforts at the Retreat, specifically concerning the mineral royalties bill. Committee membership: John G., Jan F., Stanton Lambert, and Connie Weinzapfel, was discussed. Ron stated he will have Rory's retreat report for the commission's July meeting. Jan F. brought up the need for a new legislative 'champion' due to Senator Weatherwax's retirement. The committee will look through the 'Wabash Caucus' for this. The November 'Presentation' concept was discussed. Jan F. agreed to work on a Nov. 12th Logansport meeting with invitations to the caucus & an honor of thanks for Senator Weatherwax's work with the commission.

Education: Ken E. brought out the results from the 'video subject' meeting held after the retreat in March. Top ideas were the 'historical' habitat & wildlife, the Wabash & Erie Canal, a 'Benchmark' review for 2016, and the plight/saga of Indiana's native inhabitants. Wm. Henry Harrison was the top 'personality' followed closely by Col. Henry Hamilton. A producer, such as WFYI, will be pursued.

The national River Rally was attended by Ken E., Ron J., Bernie D., Rae S., and many others including the staff of the state association of Soil & Water Cons. Districts. Ken noted the benefit he received from a session on "Water Words that Work" regarding the different terminology used and each person's understanding of it. Other workshops attended were discussed.

Ken E. announced that the host facility needed the meeting room soon and asked that the members help in pushing along the agenda.

Old Business

The "Heritage Corridor" 'brand' art work was discussed, specifically the re-work for a lighter gold ring to provide legibility at greater read speed. Ron is awaiting the results of this request.

Ryan H., the legislative director for DNR, has been charged with the New Harmony bridge project. He has been assigned to work with Dr. Rice to identify a plan to 'save' this bridge. He declined to be directly involved in any other Corridor Commission project but would be happy to make suggestions within his expertise. He asked for time on the July agenda for the N.H. bridge proposal.

Dale B. has finalized the Executive Director's '08 Contract. Per the Commission's approval in March, the only change from the '07 contract was the addition of out-of-state travel expense. Since this travel needed a set amount, Dale B., Steve Morris, John G. and Ron J., agreed upon a \$1,000.00 budget. After Ron J's signing, the contract will be mailed to John G. for his signature.

Purchasing priorities and needs were covered during the budget discussion. Connie W. thanked the Commission for its support of the upcoming 8/16/08 Paddle Fest.

New Business

Ron J's attendance at the various county Board of Commissioners' meetings was discussed. Ron displayed the front page news report on his presentation at the Huntington County Board meeting. Ron indicated meetings with Carroll and Posey County Commissioners were set for May and June. Ron asked for all members to report regularly to their county Boards, to keep them focused on the Wabash River Corridor, and to schedule Ron's visits at no less than two year intervals.

Ron requested Commission members help man the booth at the Indiana State Fair on August 14, 2008. He will be promoting the 8/16 Paddle Fest and, from 1:00 to 3:30, showing the film "The Wabash: Life on the 'Bright White' River." Though any time will help, booth hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., someone must be there while Ron is preparing to and showing the video.

The deadline for articles for the next *Reflections* newsletter is July 31, 2008. Carroll County has been well represented in the newsletter, because the 'call' is made known to many and Ron, therefore, receives a lot from them. Dale B. suggested that Dale P., or someone on his 1812 Bicentennial Committee, might submit articles in a series to promote the upcoming 2009 - 2012 events.

Announcements & General Discussion

- * The Tippecanoe De-Trash the Wabash will be May 17, 2008 and Miami County is interested but has yet to schedule their event. Ron is on the Banks of the Wabash organizing committee.

- * The Merom Bluff Chautauqua will be held June 6-8. Ron will be there on the 6th.

- * The Carroll County "Grand Opening" of the water trail will be in conjunction with their Heritage Transportation Festival, at 2:00 p.m. on June 15. George Mears related this would be in conjunction with the Carrollton Bridge re-dedication and the christening of a new stretch of the Wabash Heritage Trail and interpretive signage by the W & E Canal Association. He hopes to have the Governor preside at the rededication (as Gov. Jackson did at the original dedication) and asked for the Commission to also invite Gov. Daniels. Ron will write and send a formal invitation to the Governor for this event and will attend to speak on the importance of the Wabash to the area.

- * River Fest will be held in West Lafayette on July 12, 2008. Ron will have an information booth set up and could use help at this event.

Ken then asked if there were any others with announcements or topics for discussion. There being none, the Commission adjourned, at 3:27 p.m., until 1:00 p.m., July 9, 2008 in Montezuma, IN.